

Ray Russell

b 1947, Islington. Guitar

Always loved music. Left school early. Taught himself guitar from age 12 - dad played piano and accordion. Age 16 bought a Hofner guitar. - bought melody maker. Saw ad that John Barry rich need guitar player - lied and said he could read music. Memorised all tunes for the audition - James Bond Theme - joined the John Barry Band. Went on tour and lie exposed but bass player taught him to read music on the tour bus in 1965.

Culture split between rock guitar and big band players. Half were old-school Bill Hailey. Half more rock.

Singer-songwriter era grew and he got session work. Charlie Katz - fixer – don't ask who it's for "Just say yes". Turn up and play. All sorts of splits and demarcations in the studio - Isobel Griffiths change things as came and people became more of a team - engineers became more open to suggestions from musicians. Lulu - Shout" a big change. Union set 3-hour rate. 10-1, 2-5 - overtime in 15-minute segments. Rate set by the union. closed shop - had to be in union. The studio was a great leveller.

Overdubs - 125% payment rate. TV good money - could make £2k per week in 1980s heyday. Players valued, good money.

Typical Day

Jingles 8am to 9am (the green hour)

10-5 two sessions

Ronnie Scotts with Gil Evans 7pm to 3am

CBS - Stay Together" Tina Turner 3am to 6am

the back to do overdubs.

He was part of the A team of sessions musicians. But other waiting in the wings to take his work!